

Letters to the Editor

At the most recent meeting of the Journal Editorial Board held in Durban in September 2005, it was agreed that efforts to encourage scholarly communication relating to research and views published in this journal, and other topical public health nutrition issues and events, be facilitated via this letters section. Letters in response to research and views expressed in papers in this journal will be supplemented with author's right of reply, to encourage active exchange in this section.

A recent special issue of this journal introduced *The New Nutrition Science project*¹, summarised in *The Giessen Declaration*², the outcome of a workshop held at the University of Giessen. This work states that to face the challenges of the twenty-first century, nutrition science needs an enlarged conceptual framework, including the 'classic' biological dimension and also social and environmental dimensions. A new definition, with principles to guide the science and its expression in food and nutrition policies, was proposed. *The New Nutrition Science project* remains a joint initiative of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences and the World Health Policy Forum. The project was presented in two plenary lectures and a linked symposium at the 2005 Durban International Congress on Nutrition (ICN).

Claus Leitzmann and Geoffrey Cannon, co-convenors of the project and co-editors of the special issue, report that at the Durban ICN, almost 100 delegates asked to contribute to the conceptual and practical development of the project, and that reactions from younger delegates, and from Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Africa, have been particularly positive. This dialogue and debate is important because regular re-conceptualisation of the core business or direction of our field is important and required.

The 'newness' of *The Giessen Declaration* and the challenges it presents is open to debate. This first letters section for 2006 continues this important reflection and re-positioning of how we think about nutrition science and its applications to public health nutrition. Bring on, join in and enjoy the debate.

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DOI: 10.1079/PHN2005903

References

- 1 Leitzmann C, Cannon G, eds. The New Nutrition Science project. *Public Health Nutrition* 2005; **8**(6A): 667–804.

- 2 The Giessen Declaration. *Public Health Nutrition* 2005; **8**(6A): 783–6.

Building capacity

Sir,

*The New Nutrition Science project*¹ is very timely. I would like to see more involvement of young nutrition scientists and public health nutritionists in its development. I am one myself, and we are tomorrow's leaders, who will drive the agenda, so we should be involved now. For example, a summer school could be organised with young nutritionists to discuss, develop and further the project. I would be happy to help in the organisation of such an event.

On the project itself as so far presented, I suggest that more attention be given to the impact of rapid population ageing, especially in middle- and low-income countries. This can be done with an emphasis on overall life-course nutrition, which is often depicted using a spiral model, the motif of *The New Nutrition Science project*.

I write here in my personal capacity.

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DOI: 10.1079/PHN2005906

Reference

- 1 Leitzmann C, Cannon G, eds. The New Nutrition Science project. *Public Health Nutrition* 2005; **8**(6A): 667–804.

Comment on New Nutrition Science project

Sir,

Public Health Nutrition has performed a great public service in publishing the papers that comprise *The New Nutrition Science project*. For those of us long in this field, the issues addressed by these papers are strikingly familiar. If anything, the New Nutrition restates well known ecological models of public health nutrition. But these have never commanded the attention they deserve, and it is high time to take a fresh look at them. Besides, expanding the definition of nutrition science to encompass social, economic, political and environmental dimensions